CLAIMS

1.   A method of testing an operational integrated software system, said system comprising a plurality of software elements, said method comprising the steps of:

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      a)   automatically registering each active element of software in a registry;

      b)   associating a set of test criteria with each registered element of software;

      c)   selecting an element registered in the registry and testing the element

10   in accordance with the associated set of test criteria; and

      d)   capturing the results of the testing of the element and comparing them to the associated test criteria.

2.   A method according to Claim 1 in which each element of software is arranged

15 to automatically register an identification of itself in the registry.

3.   A method according to Claims 1 or 2 in which each element of software is arranged to capture the results of its testing.

20 4.   A method according to any of Claims 1 to 3 further comprising the step of automatically providing a report on the results of the testing.

5.   A method according to any preceding claim in which the test criteria are defined using a scripting language and said method further comprises the step of

25 parsing the test criteria to convert them into a form for testing against.

6.   An apparatus for testing an operational integrated software system, said system comprising a plurality of software elements, said apparatus comprising:

30   a)   means for the automatic registration of each active element of software;

      b)   means for associating a set of test criteria with each registered element of software;

c) means for selecting a registered element of software and testing the element in accordance with the associated test criteria; and

d) means for comparing the results of the testing of the element against the associated test criteria.

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7. An apparatus according to Claim 6 in which each element of software is provided with means for automatically registering itself.

8. A method according to Claim 6 or 7 in which each element of software is

10 provided with means for capturing the results of its testing.

9. An apparatus according to any of Claims 6 to 8 further comprising means for producing a report of the results of testing an element of software.

15 10. An apparatus according to any of Claims 6 to 9 in which the test criteria are defined using a scripting language and the apparatus further comprises means for parsing the test criteria to convert them into a form for testing against.

11. A data carrier loadable into a computer and carrying instructions for causing

20 the computer to carry out the method according to Claim 1.

12. A data carrier loadable into a computer and carrying instructions for enabling